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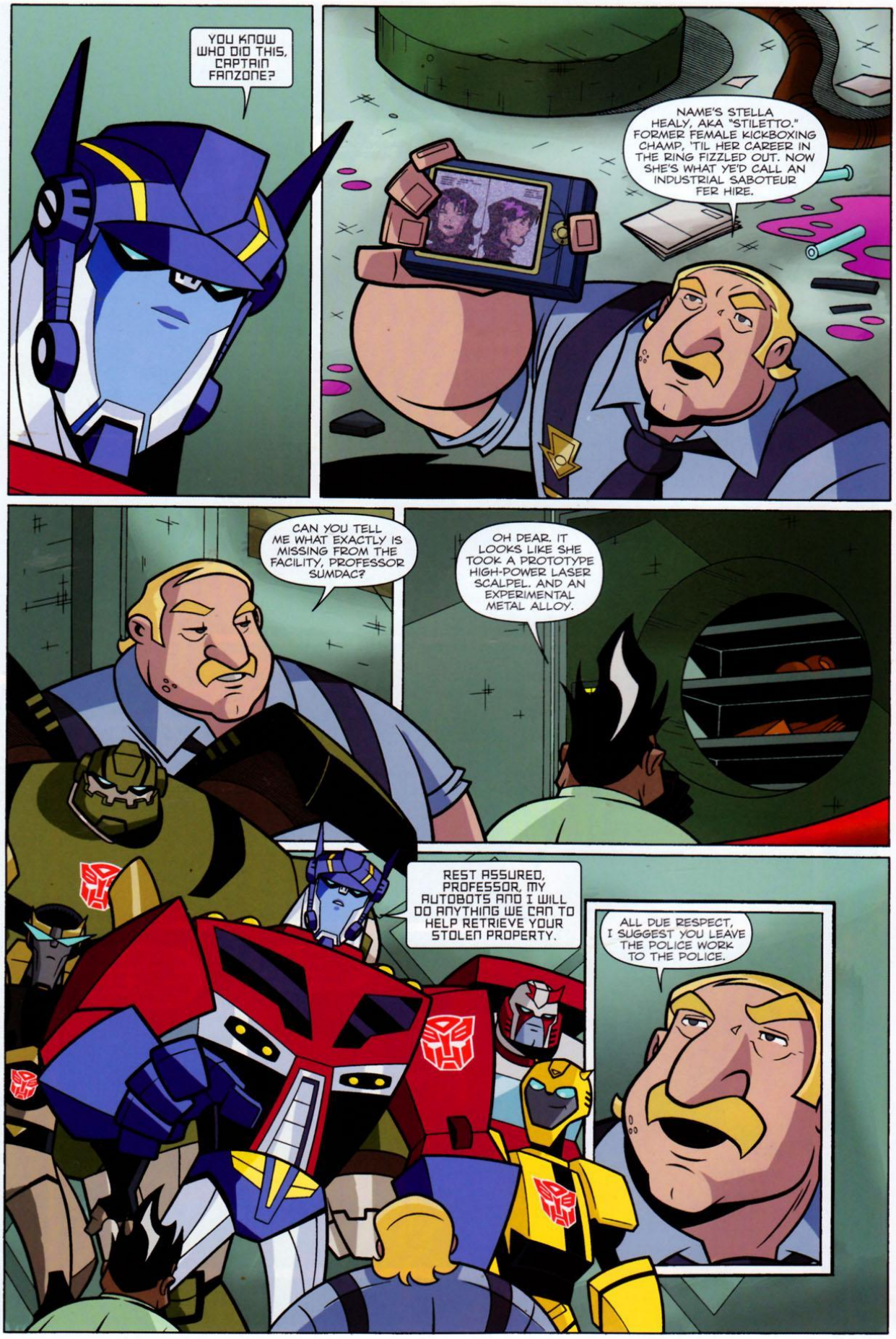
STILLETO
I CAN'T IMAGINE HOW THIS HAPPENED...
CLEARLY YER PERP KNEW WHAT HE WAS LOOKIN' FOR.
I THINK YOUR "HE" IS A "SHE," CAPTAIN.
WE CAUGHT THIS ON THE SECURITY CAM... JUST BEFORE SHE SLICED IT OFF THE WALL.
AND I THOUGHT I HATED MACHINES.
WELL, THAT EXPLAINS THE HOLE IN YER SECURITY DOOR, PROFESSOR.


YOU KNOW WHO DID THIS, CAPTAIN FANZONE?
NAME'S STELLA HEALY, AKA "STILETTO." FORMER FEMALE KICKBOXING CHAMP, 'TIL HER CAREER IN THE RING FIZZLED OUT. NOW SHE'S WHAT YE'D CALL AN INDUSTRIAL SABOTEUR FER HIRE.
CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT EXACTLY IS MISSING FROM THE FACILITY, PROFESSOR SUMDAC?
OH DEAR. IT LOOKS LIKE SHE TOOK A PROTOTYPE HIGH-POWER LASER SCALPEL. AND AN EXPERIMENTAL METAL ALLOY.
REST ASSURED, PROFESSOR. MY AUTOBOTS AND I WILL DO ANYTHING WE CAN TO HELP RETRIEVE YOUR STOLEN PROPERTY.
ALL DUE RESPECT, I SUGGEST YOU LEAVE THE POLICE WORK TO THE POLICE.

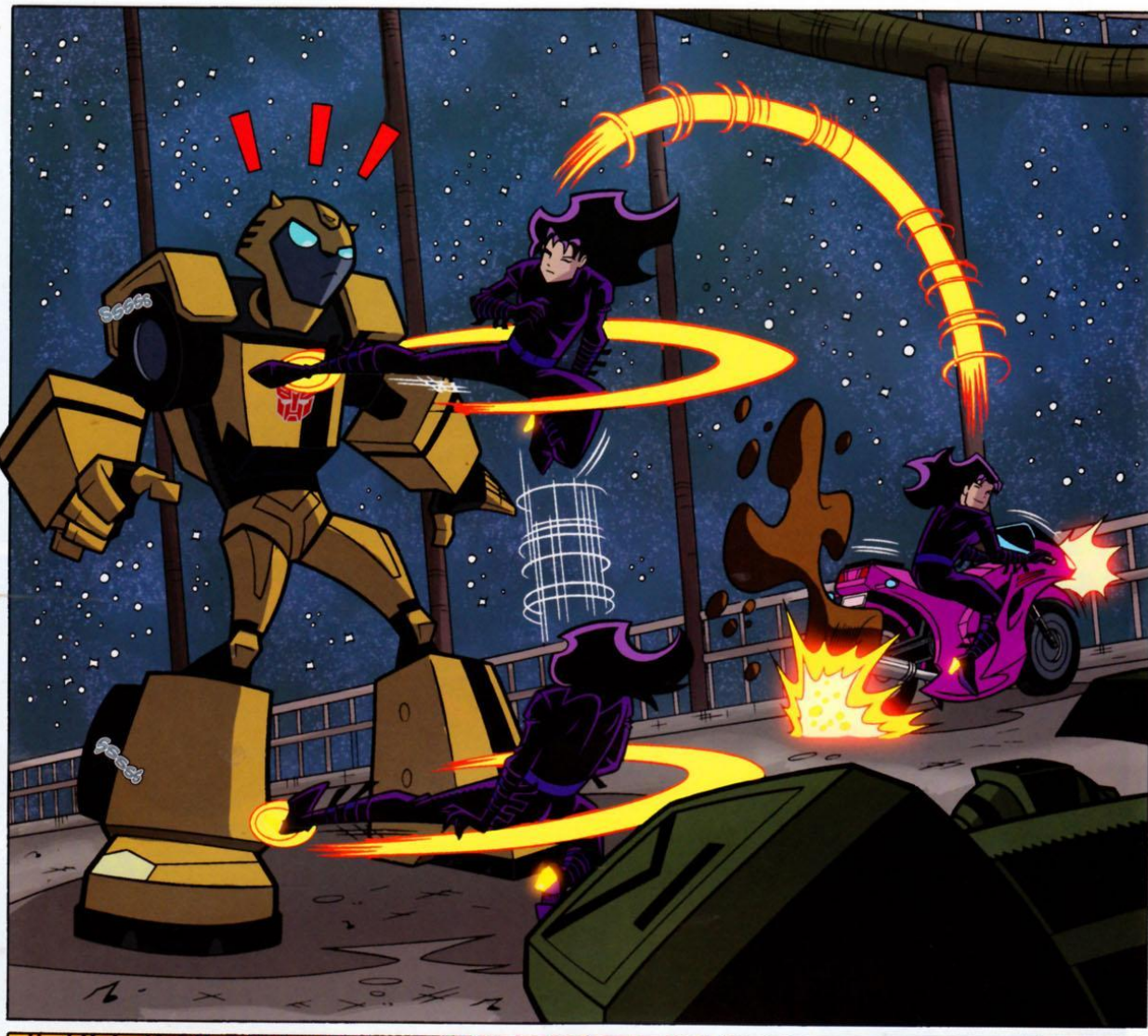
"I MEAN, IT AIN'T LIKE SHE'S GONNA JUST PARADE A BUNCHA HOT GOODS OUT IN PUBLIC."
AMBASSADOR BRIDGE
"WE'RE COMING TO YOU LIVE ON THE SCENE FROM DETROIT'S AMBASSADOR BRIDGE, WHERE A MYSTERIOUS VANDAL IS APPARENTLY THREATENING TO COLLAPSE THE STRUCTURE BY SLICING THROUGH THE SUPPORT CABLES."
RRRRRRUMBLE
FWIZZZZZ
SNAP

SNAP
IMPRESSIVE FOOTWORK.
NOW PERHAPS YOU SHOULD RETURN THE STOLEN LASER SCALPEL AND METAL ALLOY BEFORE SOMEONE...
...GETS HURT.
SHLINK

ZZZZKT
ZZZZKT
DON'T WORRY, PROWL! I GOT THIS ONE!
PWOOOSH
BUMBLEBEE! NO!

KABOOOOM!
RATCHET! TAKE CARE OF THE CABLES! I'LL DOUSE THIS BLAZE!
HMPH! WHAT IS IT WITH THIS CREW AND FIXING BRIDGES ANYWAY?

THE ONLY THING I'M FIXING IS THIS STILETTO LADY!
SNAP
KLONK
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, POINTY HEELS!
JUST 'CAUSE I CAN'T FIRE MY STINGERS DOESN'T MEAN I CAN'T TAKE YOU ON HAND-TO-SERVO!


SCOOT
SCOOT

HA! NEVER EVEN TOUCHED ME!
AND YOU'LL NEVER GET AWAY FROM THE FASTEST THING ON...

...WHEELS?

?!
HATE TO PULL YOUR RIDE OUT FROM UNDER YOU, MA'AM, BUT—
—NAW, I TAKE IT BACK. I KIND OF ENJOYED THAT!
THUD
I KNOW CAPTAIN FANZONE TOLD US TO "LEAVE THE POLICE WORK TO THE POLICE." BUT SOMEHOW I DON'T THINK HE'LL MIND.
SNAP

THUNK
THUNK
NOW, MISS "STILETTO," LET'S SEE ABOUT RETURNING THAT STOLEN PROPERTY TO PROFESSOR SUMDAC.

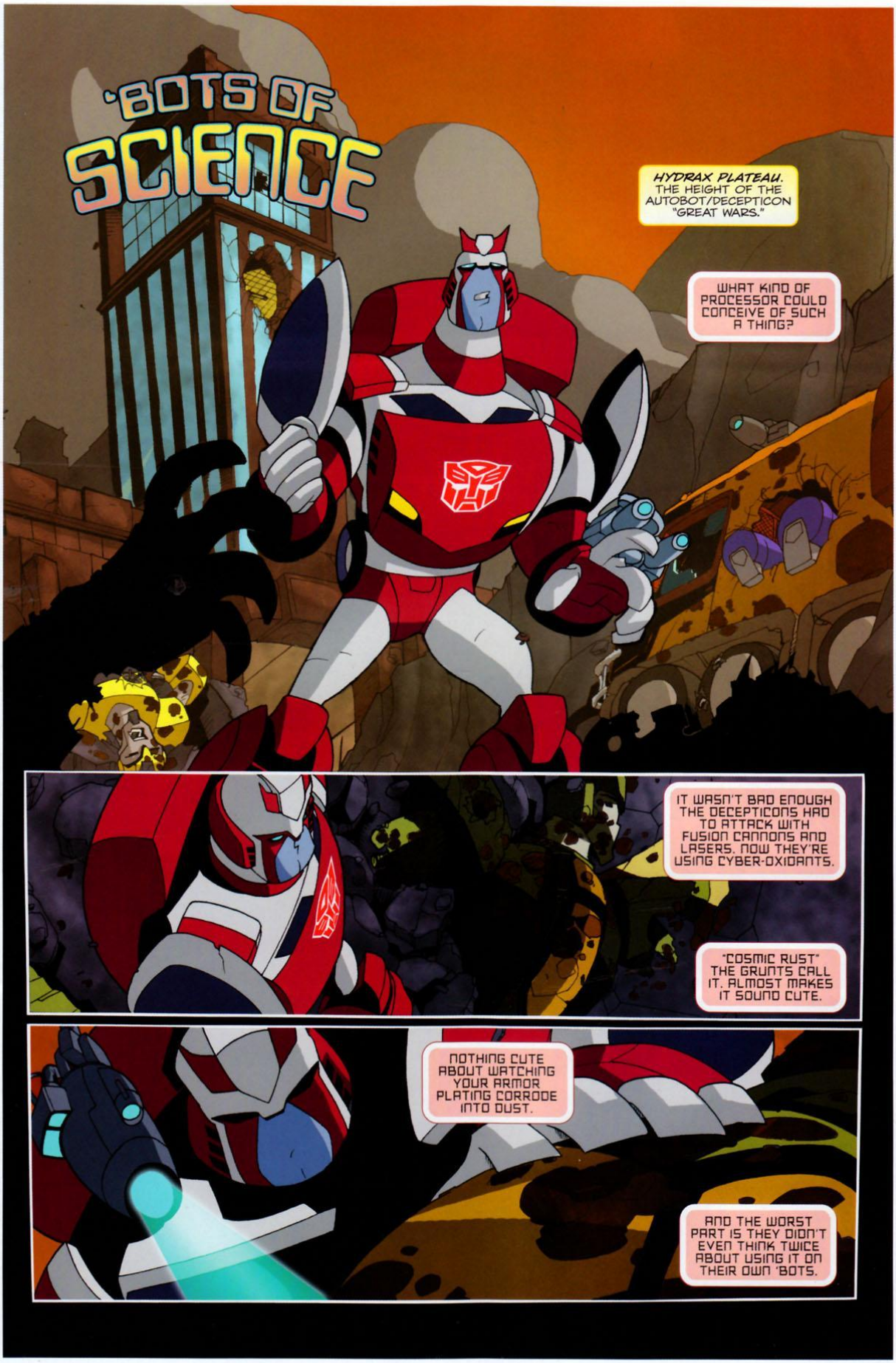
"STELLA HEALY, ALSO KNOWN AS 'STILETTO' WAS ARRESTED TODAY IN CONNECTION WITH AN ATTEMPT TO COLLAPSE THE AMBASSADOR BRIDGE, AS WELL AS THE THEFT OF SEVERAL EXPERIMENTAL ITEMS FROM SUMDAC SYSTEMS.

THE NEAR CATASTROPHE WAS NARROWLY AVERTED BY SOME QUICK ACTION BY THE AUTOBOTS, FOR WHICH OFFICIALS FROM BOTH DETROIT AND WINDSOR EXTEND THEIR HEARTFELT GRATITUDE.

WHAT I DON'T GET IS WHY STILETTO WAS TRYING TO COLLAPSE THE BRIDGE IN THE FIRST PLACE.

THE METAL ALLOY AND LASER SCALPEL SHOULD SERVE AS REASONABLE MATERIAL FOR MY NEW SWORDS. I WOULD CALL THIS A SUCCESSFUL FIELD TEST.

END.


'BOTS OF SCIENCE
HYDRAX PLATEAU. THE HEIGHT OF THE AUTOBOT/DECEPTICON "GREAT WARS."
WHAT KIND OF PROCESSOR COULD CONCEIVE OF SUCH A THING?
IT WASN'T BAD ENOUGH THE DECEPTICONS HAD TO ATTACK WITH FUSION CANNONS AND LASERS. NOW THEY'RE USING CYBER-OXIDANTS.
"COSMIC RUST" THE GRUNTS CALL IT. ALMOST MAKES IT SOUND CUTE.
NOTHING CUTE ABOUT WATCHING YOUR ARMOR PLATING CORRODE INTO DUST.
AND THE WORST PART IS THEY DIDN'T EVEN THINK TWICE ABOUT USING IT ON THEIR OWN 'BOTS.

THE COMMANDER'S VOICE IN MY COMMLINK SHOCKS ME BACK TO REALITY.
FIELD TECH RATCHET! ANY SURVIVORS OUT THERE?
BUT SO DOES ANOTHER VOICE...
MEDIC!
I THINK I SEE ONE STIRRING, SIR. IT LOOKS LIKE A DECEPTICON.
LEAVE HIM!
SIR?
THE 'CONS LAUNCHED THIS ATTACK. THEY KNEW THE CONSEQUENCES.
MAYBE THE LEADERS KNEW, SIR, BUT THE SOLDIERS ON THE GROUND?

THAT'S AN ORDER, FIELD TECH.
YES, SIR.
SPARK HELP ME, BUT I'M PROGRAMMED TO HEAL. ENEMY OR NO, I CAN'T JUST LEAVE HIM.
YOU'RE... AN AUTOBOT.
YOU CALLED FOR A MEDIC. YOU DIDN'T SPECIFY WHAT KIND.
I CAN DO *THIS* IF IT MAKES YOU FEEL BETTER, BUT I KINDA PREFER TO DO FIRST AID WITH *BOTH* HANDS.

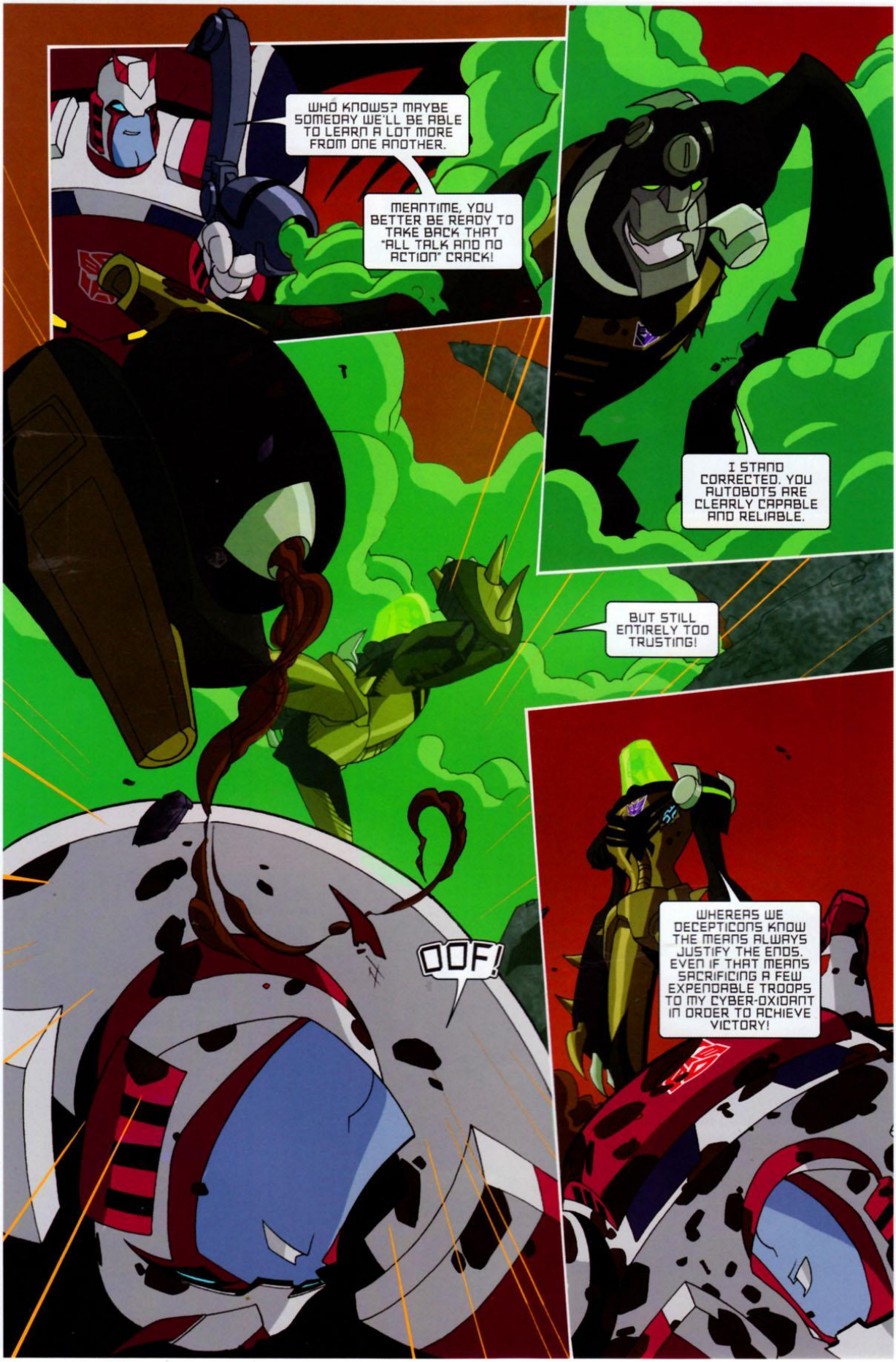
YOUR SHELL'S OXIDIZING TOO FAST. SORRY, BUT YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO LOSE THE LEGS.
ZZZZZZZZ...
WAIT!
DON'T WORRY. I'VE GOT AN EMP GENERATOR. YOU WON'T FEEL A THING.
I MEAN... THERE MAY BE ANOTHER WAY.
"OFFLINE BEFORE SURRENDER"? SORRY, THAT'S NOT THE WAY WE AUTOBOTS DO THINGS.
TRUST ME, THIS IS THE ONLY WAY.

THERE'S AN ANTI-OXIDANT THAT CAN REVERSE THE EFFECTS OF THE RUST. I LOST MY SUPPLY IN THE BATTLE. BUT WITH YOUR MEDICAL TOOLS AND MY CHEMICALS WE CAN SYNTHESIZE A NEW BATCH.
HOW DO I KNOW YOU WON'T JUST TRY TO POISON ME? OR WHIP UP A LITTLE EXPLOSIVE COCKTAIL?
HOW DO I KNOW YOU WON'T JUST KEEP THE ANTIDOTE FOR YOURSELF AND LEAVE ME HERE TO RUST?
WE'RE BOTH 'BOTS OF SCIENCE. SURELY WE CAN WORK TOGETHER. DON'T YOU AUTOBOTS CLAIM TO BE ALL ABOUT TRUST?

" 'BOTS OF SCIENCE," HUH? DIDN'T THINK YOU DECEPTICONS GAVE A DIRTBIKE'S EXHAUST PORT ABOUT SCIENCE. THOUGHT YOU JUST LIKED BLOWING THINGS UP.
TYPICAL AUTOBOT PROPAGANDA. FOR YOUR INFORMATION, NOT ALL DECEPTICONS ARE MERELY INTERESTED IN "BLOWING THINGS UP."
SO WHAT ARE YOU, THEN? SOME KINDA DECEPTICON MEDIC?
I HAVE A... MEDICAL BACKGROUND, YES. NAME'S OILSLICK.
YOU CAN CALL ME RATCHET.

VERY WELL, "RATCHET." SO, DO WE GET DOWN TO WORK NOW, OR ARE WE JUST ALL TALK AND NO ACTION LIKE YOU AUTOBOTS?
THIS ANSWER YOUR QUESTION, SMART 'BOT?
THE CONTENTS OF THE LARGE VIAL NEED TO BE MIXED WITH THE CONTENTS OF THE SMALLER VIAL TEN-TO-ONE, THEN SUPERHEATED AND DISTILLED OF IMPURITIES.
DON'T SUPPOSE YOU WANNA TELL ME WHAT'S IN THESE VIALS.
TRADE SECRET.

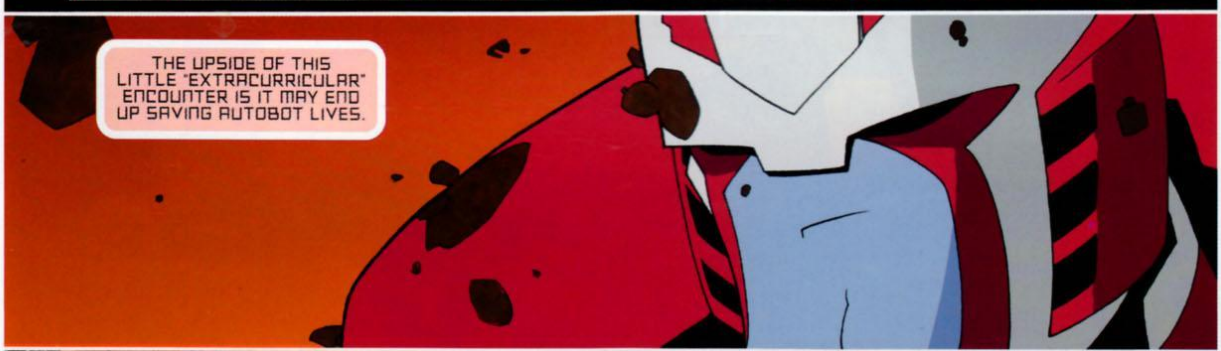
THE RESULTING VAPOR MUST NOW BE PRESSURIZED AND ADMINISTERED WITH A HIGH-VOLTAGE CHARGE. CAN YOU DO THAT?
TRICKY, BUT NOT IMPOSSIBLE.
SO TELL ME SOMETHING, "OILSLICK." HOW COME YOU'RE SO WILLING TO LAY DOWN YOUR SPARK FOR A FACTION THAT'S WILLING TO EXPOSE THEIR OWN 'BOTS TO THESE KINDS OF DEADLY CHEMICALS?
HOW COME *YOU'RE* SO WILLING TO BELONG TO A FACTION SO SHORT-SIGHTED THAT IT BELIEVES IN NO CAUSE GREATER THAN PRESERVING THEIR OWN SHELLS?
YOU GOT A LOT TO LEARN ABOUT AUTOBOTS, PAL.
AND YOU OF DECEPTICONS.


WHO KNOWS? MAYBE SOMEDAY WE'LL BE ABLE TO LEARN A LOT MORE FROM ONE ANOTHER.
MEANTIME, YOU BETTER BE READY TO TAKE BACK THAT "ALL TALK AND NO ACTION" CRACK!
I STAND CORRECTED. YOU AUTOBOTS ARE CLEARLY CAPABLE AND RELIABLE.
BUT STILL ENTIRELY TOO TRUSTING!
OOF!
WHEREAS WE DECEPTICONS KNOW THE MEANS ALWAYS JUSTIFY THE ENDS. EVEN IF THAT MEANS SACRIFICING A FEW EXPENDABLE TROOPS TO MY CYBER-OXIDANT IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE VICTORY!

YOUR CYBER-OXIDANT? THEN, YOU'RE NOT A MEDIC. YOU'RE...
A CHEMICAL WARRIOR, YES. AND A SLAGGING GOOD ONE!
UNFORTUNATELY, I HADN'T CALCULATED THE WIND SHIFT AND ENDED UP GETTING HIT WITH MY OWN "COSMIC RUST," AS YOU AUTOBOTS ARE SO FOND OF CALLING IT.
FORTUNATELY, I STUMBLED UPON A VERY TALENTED AUTOBOT MEDIC. ONE WHOSE USEFULNESS TO ME HAS JUST EXPIRED...
SNAP
THE OXIDANT BURNS. BUT I HAVE TO KEEP HIM HERE JUST A LITTLE LONGER.
SO ALL THAT TALK ABOUT 'BOTS OF SCIENCE AND TRUST WAS JUST...
LIES! DECEPTION! IT'S RIGHT THERE IN THE NAME. "DECEPTI-CON." WHEN WILL YOU AUTOBOT FOOLS EVER FIGURE THAT OUT?

LUCKILY FOR ME THE 'CON IS SO FULL OF HIMSELF HE DOESN'T NOTICE I JUST SWIPED HIS ANTIDOTE RIGHT OUT FROM UNDER HIM.

ENOUGH LEFT FOR ME, AND MORE FOR THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE TO ANALYZE.


THE UPSIDE OF THIS LITTLE "EXTRACURRICULAR" ENCOUNTER IS IT MAY END UP SAVING AUTOBOT LIVES.

LOOKS LIKE WE *CAN* LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER.
I CERTAINLY LEARNED A LITTLE BIT ABOUT DECEPTION FROM THEM TODAY.
I JUST WONDER IF THEY'LL EVER LEARN ANYTHING ABOUT CONSCIENCE FROM US.
END.

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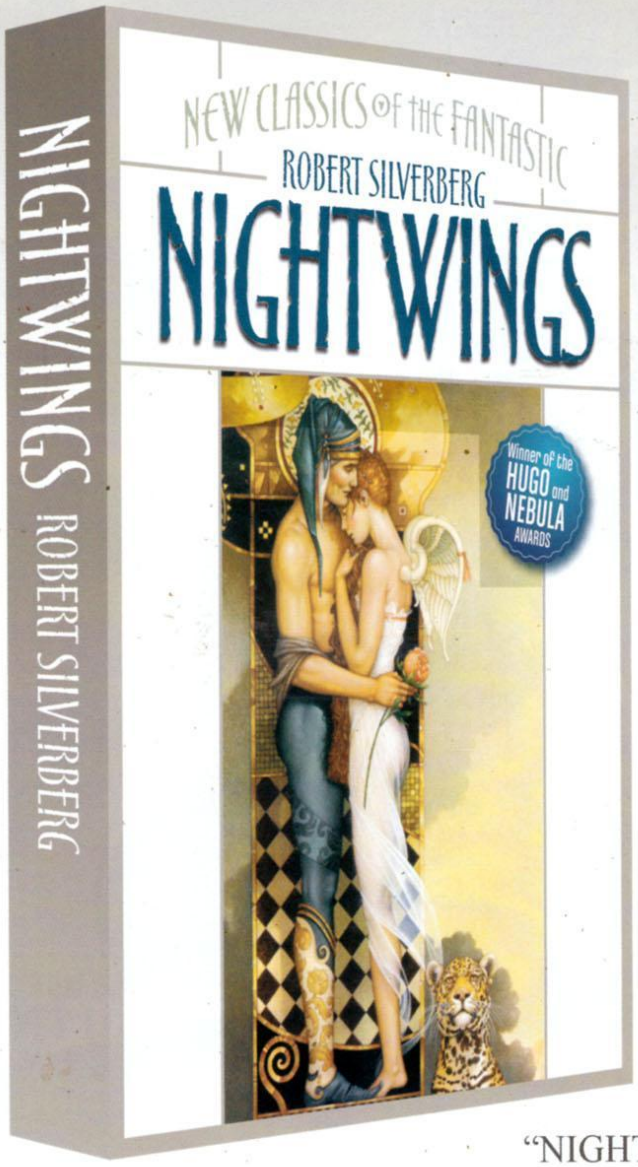

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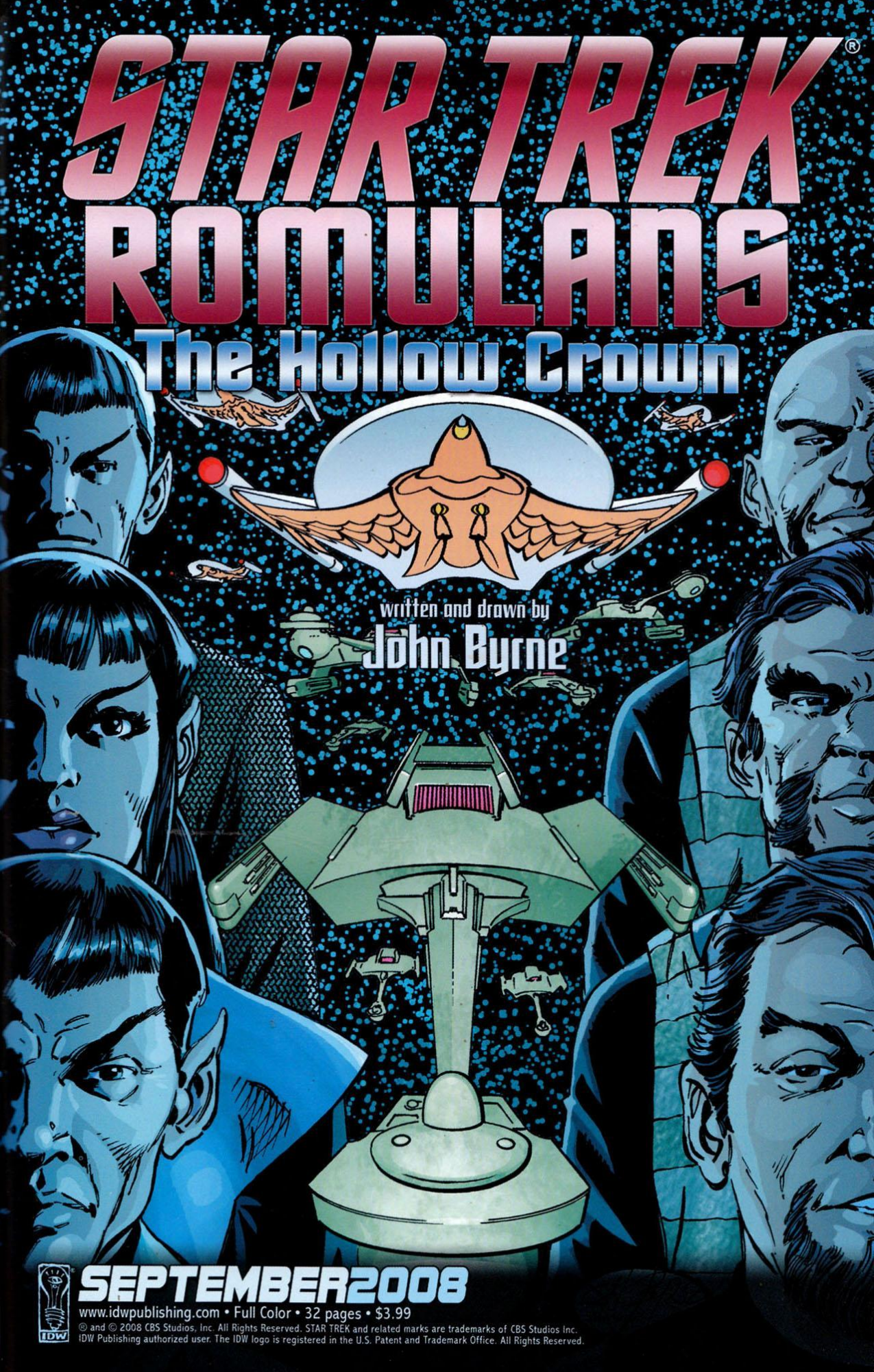

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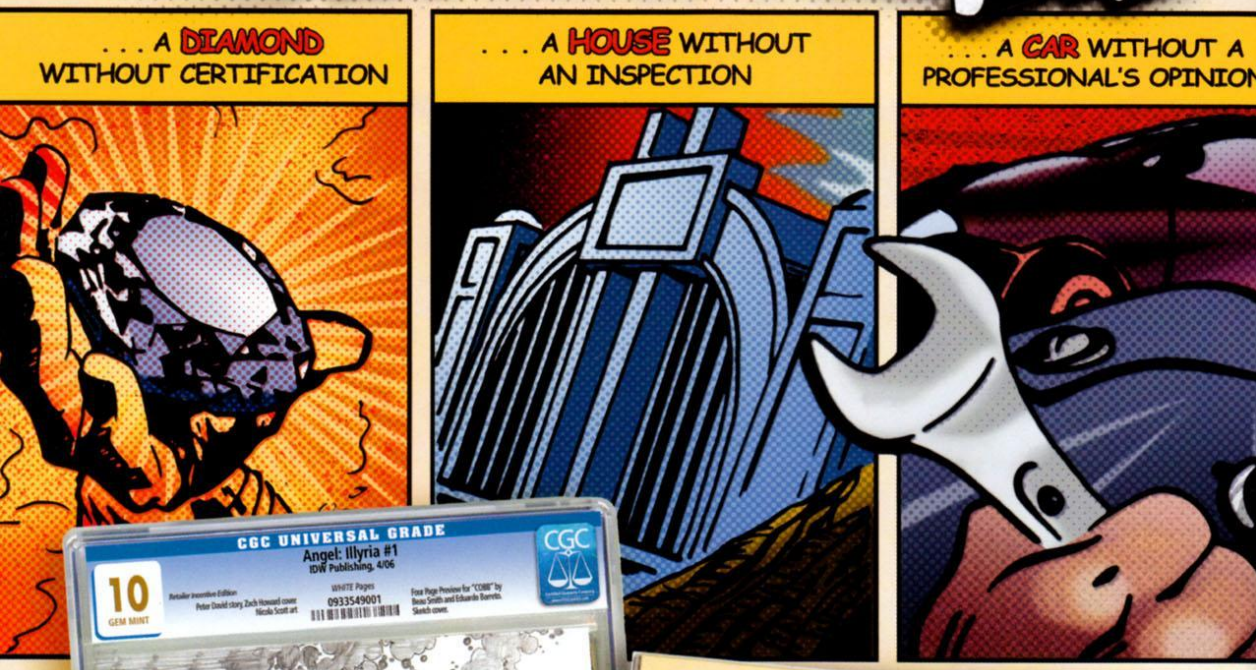

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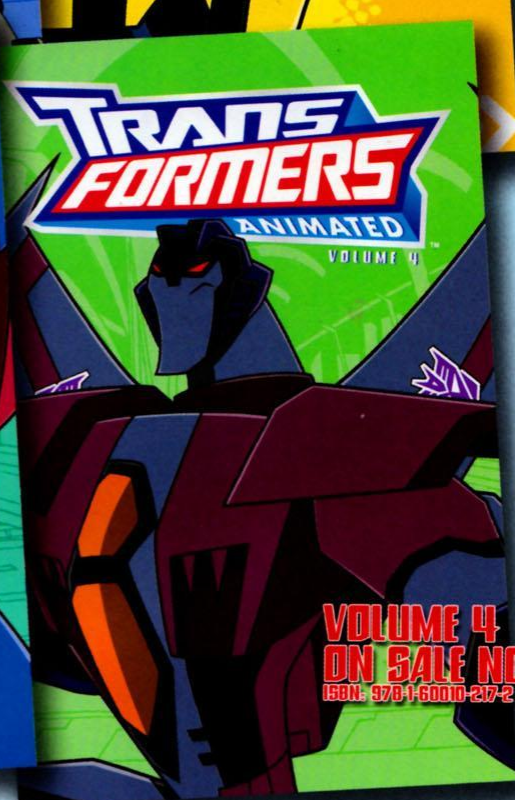

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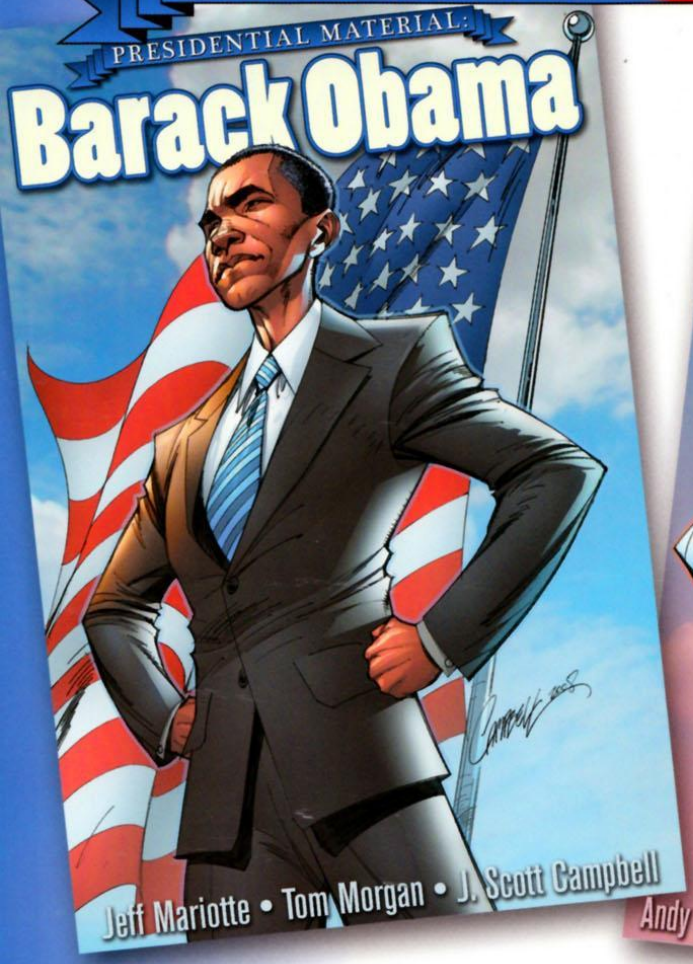

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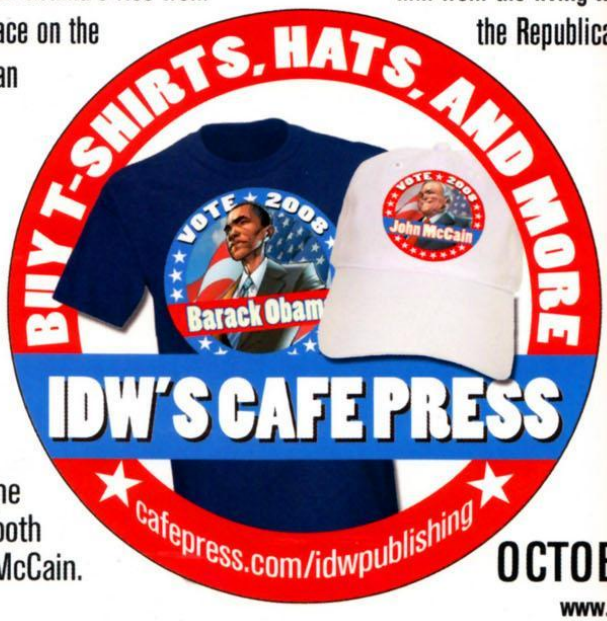

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